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[THE
RIVAL WIVES

ANSWER'D:

OR,

SKIRRA to CLARISSA.



LONDON:

Printed for W. LLOYD in Chancery-Lane, and sold by the Book-
fellers of London and Westminster. 1738.

(Price One Shilling.)

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AND
THE

OR

2 KIRK & CLARK



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RIVAL WIVES

ANSWER'D:

C *CLARISSA* ended -- and the Dæmons round
 Approv'd her Censures by a murm'ring Sound;
SKIRRA, with Indignation fir'd, withdrew
 To vent her Moans beneath a blighted Yew,
 There for a While contemplating her Fate,
 In Expectation of Revenge she fate;
Revenge! that ever guides the female Mind,
 To every other Inclination blind:
 That *darling Passion* conquers all the rest,
 And reigns sole Monarch of each Fair One's Breast.
 Her Hopes now rise, now sink again to Fear
 When *FATE* presents her Lord's lov'd Image near:
 Unhappy Fair! said he, ah! cease to grieve,
 Your Death, afflicting, scarcely lets him live:
 Unmourn'd, unwept, your hated Rival fell,
 No Tears bewail'd, no Groans sigh'd out her Knell:
 Let this glad Thought revive thy drooping Heart,
 And still one glimm'ring Beam of Joy impart;
 In pensive Grief for You he pines alone,
 Your Death he moans, or else *he seems to moan*;

Still,

Still, next his Heart, your Image dear remains,

And the hot Fever glows thro' all his Veins:

E'en now, to Sorrow yielding, sinks his Head,

This only can he utter ---- SKIRRA's dead!

Fond as the tender Infant, when interr'd

The little Master fees his fav'rite Bird,

Then drown'd in Tears, without swell'd Lip he stands,

Denies all Comfort from his Nurse's Hands,

And quite enrag'd, around the Room he flies,

Or else, in *sullen Pouts*, sits down and cries.

But that the Liberty's to us deny'd

To know what will superior Ghosts betide,

I would inform you, when the Thread would end,

But that must on the *Higher Fates* depend.

We *petty Ones* are to low Causes sign'd,

To wrack the Wretches of a lesser Kind:

But those who to Ambition's *Heights* are led,

Them PLUTO's self takes care to *snap their Thread*.

Thus spoke the *Fate*, then gliding swift away,

Left her to Grief, and to Despair, a Prey:

In sudden Madness, starting up! --- she flies!

And where's CLARISSA! where's my Bane? she cries:

Shall I sit tamely still, and bear my Wrongs,

While unto her much greater Shame belongs?

No, let me first forego my Sexes Right,

Drove from the Company of Females quite:

There

There was a Time when Freedom could prevail
 And every Fair One was allow'd to rail:
 The Fair, that ever was true Virtue's Friend,
 Could ne'er the Cause of Villany defend:
 Let Villains quake, the Man of Conscience clear,
 Smiles at her Stings, nor feels a guilty Fear:
 The Good, uncentur'd were, the Bad alone,
 By Name grew infamous to all the Town:
 In all, who publick Justice dare defy,
 As sunk beneath the Law, or rais'd too high,
 Vice was deem'd criminal in any Shape,
 And tho' the Judge, our Tongues they could not scape,
 But fell the Victims of despotick Rage
 When *Tea* and *Scandal* did the Fair engage:
 I there could shine, and shall my breathless Shade
 Now less resent an Injury when dead?
 But Passion in nought else but Folly reigns;
 A gen'rous Soul too-hasty Wrath disdains.
 In calm Serenity I'll speak my Mind,
Just to her *Faults*, but to her *Follies blind*:

Why am I still perplex'd by cruel Fate?
 Why am I made the Object of your Hate?
 If Heaven had fated that our Loves should join
 In the same Object, --- is that Failing mine?
 Had you been blest'd, yet I would ne'er repine.
 Can nuptial Ties, or all dull Bands compare
 With that true gen'rous Passion we did share?

That Bond's soon sever'd by the slightest Stroke;
 The nuptial Vow, --- *you know*, --- may soon be broke,
 But Faith to Faith engag'd, forms stronger Bands
 Than mystick Priestcraft joining venal Hands.
 As *Love's* the noblest Passion from Above,
 So *Friendship* is the noblest Part of *Love*:
 In vain do Parents force, or Transports woo,
 Unless our Inclination points the View,
 Souls form'd for mutual Joy (by Nature pair'd)
 No Pow'r can stop, no Int'rest can retard,
 While those whom strong Antipathies disjoin,
 Tho' link'd by Law, by Int'rest, or by Coin,
 To endless Hate, and endless Torments born,
 Like jarring *Elements* all *Union* scorn.
 This Friendship 'twas, join'd mine and *Bufo's* Soul;
 He had your Hand 'tis true, --- but by Controul:
 If from the menial Herd selecting me,
 He fix'd me in an eminent Degree,
 That gen'rous Care must all my Soul alarm,
 Glow in my Breast, and ev'ry Vital warm:
 If I'd no Merit to deserve that Care,
 His Kindness, then, was more humane by far.
 By how much less the Object has a Claim,
 The Giver merits so much greater Fame:
 Nor boast I *Blood*, few Virtues we receive
 From all the Blood our Ancestors can give
 This all we have --- by keeping them in view,
 We Honour's Paths the sooner may pursue:

But

But what are Titles, what the Blood ye boast?
 Is not all Sense of Truth and Honour lost?
 What's Wealth, when rank Corruption taints the Soul,
 And Crimes of blackest Dye run through the Whole?
 The Leading Great too soon infect the rest,
 And Virtue's criminal where'er possess'd.
 Thus Vice triumphant reigns without Controul,
 Eclipses Virtue, and destroys the Soul?
 Hence Madam *E*—boasts her ill-spent Life,
 Disdaining Marriage, and the Name of *Wife*,
 Despises *Censure*, scorns to be *out-done*,
 Jaunts through the Streets, and shows her Bastard Son;
 And hence *some Ladies*, scorch'd with lustful Fire,
 With *strange Machines* indulge their lewd Desire:
 Hence *Self-Pollution* nips the *Budding Youth*,
 Hence flies *Diana*, and *The Goddess Truth*.

No Pride, no false Ambition fir'd my Breast,
 Tho' of his Heart in full Possession blest;
 I ask'd no Equipage, nor courted State,
 Content to share the *Medium* of my Fate;
 Nor roll'd I thro' the City's spacious Street,
 In hopes some start-up, new Gallant to meet;
 I ne'er in publick yet avow'd my Flame,
 Or let each *China-shop* record my Shame:
 Conquer'd by Love, I fought but him alone,
 True as the *Turtle* to her constant Moan:

So soft he spoke, so sweetly kind he kist,
 The Maid, though e'er so nice, could not resist.
 My Triumphs rose, I own, above my Wish,
 Nor could my richest Fancy paint such Bliss,
 As to behold thee banish'd from his Bed,
 And I with Joy accepted in thy stead:
 What could the haughtiest Rival ask for more,
 Rais'd to the Summit of Delight and Pow'r?
 While you in low Disgrace contented sat,
 Nor dare accuse th' Injustice of your Fate,
 To me in ev'ry knotty Point he flew,
 And I unravel'd all the mazy Clue;
 Search'd thro' the Politician's well-form'd Plan,
 Out-thought my Sex, and quite out-acted Man;
 Pointed the Path, where he might safely tread,
 Free from Disgrace, from Shame, or Danger's Dread.
 In no Distress my Counsels I deny'd,
 But, like sage *Mentor*, was his *Better Guide*.

Thus Pleasure wing'd the fleeting Hours away,
 Beneath my Feet all *India's* Riches lay;
 The *Wise* of every Nation wrote to me,
 And *Ancient Nobles* gladly bent the Knee;
 Rais'd above *Scandal*, I its Pow'r despis'd,
 All *Shame* by *Greatness* is at once disguis'd.
Virtue and *Fame*, however they appear,
 Are but dull *Gewgaws* which the *Vulgar* scare:

There the low Mean-one, fully prone to abuse,
 Takes great Delight his Neighbour to accuse:
 The un plac'd Dangler damns the Man that's in,
 And Atheists charge Right Reverends with Sin:
 Vices conceal'd, they study to declare,
 And strip themselves to leave another bare:
 Merit they cry's a Mark for Envy's Aim,
 And Scandal's ever prompt to attend on Fame:
 Hence ev'ry Cit can o'er her cooling Tea
 Rail at the Ladies drinking *Ratafa*;
 But well we know, who'd Infamy defy,
 Must first take care to fix their Station high!
 Young Country Maids, their Virtue slowly yield,
 By none discover'd but the Bush or Field;
 While *Flavia*, only Daughter of a Peer,
 Sins all the Day without Disguise or Fear:
 Whilst the Cit *Dorus*, careful of his Fame,
 Caresses *Betty* private from his Dame;
 To Morning and to Ev'ning Pray'rs keeps close,
 Yet sily spends his Guinea at the *Rose*.
 Lord *Fopling* to his Miss declares his Flame,
 And thinks to be a *Keeper* is no Shame;
 Spends twice the Income of his small Estate,
 Losing a *Thousand* at a single *Sett*.—

Be bold in *Vice*, as well as *Love* and *War*,
 And busy *Tongues* to censure shall not dare;

You *tamely* shrunk, *acknowledging* your Fears,
 Confess'd your Crime, and fell o'erwhelm'd in Tears,
 Hoping by *Penitence*, and *Length of Time*,
 To *pray* and *sigh* away your *venial Crime*.
 Why then am I *revil'd*? why call'd *Ingrate*?
 'Twas Love directed me, and *fix'd my Fate*:
 Address'd by him, and courted to his Arms,
 With all his *Eloquence*, his *moving Charms*;
 What Virgin could his fond Endearments shun?
 O think, *Clarissa*, what you would have done!
 To see him come with all the Fire of Youth,
 Unbounded Transports, and unfeigned Truth,
 Leaving the World, with me thro' Glades to rove,
 And waste the fleeting Moments all in *Love*:
 What more could Woman's utmost Pride desire?
 What more the fondest of our Sex require?
 When at deep Counsels, where *just Sense* presides,
 He led them all, the very *Guide of Guides*!
 When lab'ring hard to give his sage Advice,
 For *six whole Hours* has look'd exceeding wise,
 And talk'd—Good Gods! how he has talk'd—much
 more
 Than *Tully* or *Demosthenes* before,
 So sternly good!—such *glorious Things* he's said,
 That struck all *Scandal* and all *Satire* dead!
 Yet look'd so kind, so dimpling soft he smil'd,
 You'd think he ne'er could fret, e'en when a *Child*!

In that hard Toil, fatigu'd with Pain and Care,
 He's often vow'd my Image still was near;
 And leaving soon the Business of Mankind,
 Me in some lonely dark Recess he'd find,
 Where *Ch--l--a's* Shore, lav'd by the gentle *Thames*,
 New Beauty gives to his reflecting Streams:
 There, secret as a Hermit's Cavern stands
 A small Retreat, where Lover's oft change Hands;
 The *pious Matron* cooling Tea prepares,
 A Bench below, a downy Couch up *Stairs*;
 Th' *officious Priestess* aids each secret Rite,
 And guards your tender Moments of Delight;
 No prying Eye betrays the Lover's Joys,
 Secluded from the publick View and Noise;
 Of such close *Haunts*, ye *Courtly Dames*, beware,
 For *Privacy's* most fatal to the Fair:
 Or here, or where gay *R---m---d's* Bow'rs ascend,
 Ye Gods! could such *delightful Scenes* offend!
 No Care perplex'd, no Fear our Souls could move,
 We gave up *All* to *Extasy* and *Love*!
 Each weak *Disguise* that *busy Man* puts on,
 Each *Mask* of Life unveil'd to *Love alone*!
 O think, ye Fair! what *Transports* I must feel,
Transports which I no longer could conceal!
 To see the Man so late in *Business* lost,
 By *fond Endearments* all his Soul engross!
 In those *soft Moments*, when the Mind's unbent,
 Devoted *All* to *Pleasure* and *Content*,

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The *artful Female* with a *Smile* can gain
 The *Statesman's Heart*, and make his *Wisdom vain*!
 Worn out with *dull Repentance, Tears, and Grief,*
 You, in good Time, have yielded up your *Life,*
 And dy'd most wretched, tho' mis-ham'd, a *Wife*!
 Then to the *Touch-stone* I apply'd his *Truth,*
 And *homely* told him he'd debauch'd my *Youth* :
 He made a *Promise* I should be his *Bride,*
 And boldly said, *That Satire he defy'd* !
 I urg'd my *Constancy, unspotted Fame,*
 Stranger to *Love,* but from his *gen'rous Flame* ;
 His grateful *Soul, warm'd with an equal Fire,*
 Confess'd my *Right,* and granted my *Desire* ;
 Then, to my *Wish,* the *Priest* in *Holy Bands*
 Confirm'd our mutual *Loves,* and join'd our *Hands* !
 This *Heav'n* decreed, and all my *Errors past*
 Were in *Oblivion* bury'd thus at last.
 But, oh ! too soon our solid *Bliss* was o'er,
 Wafted by *Charon* to this gloomy *Shore,*
 Where still the *Joys* I shar'd on *Earth,* I share,
 And still his *Guardian,* hover in the *Air* ;
 Whilst thou in *Discontent* art doom'd by *Fate*
 To share the evil *Dæmons* wretched *State* :
 A *Fury* haunts thee, and thy *Steps* pursues,
 Mocking thy *Sight* with strange delusive *Views* ;
 Whilst a false *Mirror* still deceives thy *Sight,*
 Shews all the wrong, but ever hides the *right* ;
 Then let the following *Truths* your *Eyes* invite :

See *how* Crowds of Friends around him wait,
 And gladly pay Attendance at his Gate;
 His Virtues such Impressions on them make,
 They *even* adore his Porter for his sake;
 Charm'd by his Presence, each forgets his Fears,
 And, pleas'd, attend his *Low-gentle* *Nemo*;
 With dumb Attention catch his every Look,
 And think a Smile's as well as if he'd spoke;
 Though humbly born, to him the Nobles bend,
 And Reverend Lawyers his righteous Cause defend;
 With Bows, sure Signs of Friendship, they him greet,
 And, through Affection, prostrate lick his Feet;
 As *J---e* with Justice, and his Furs weigh'd down,
 His Justice yet must more impartial own;
 His Prudence such, he knows each Empire's Doom,
 And sees the Past, the Present, and to come;
 His Mercy such, that start him but a Foe,
 His soft prevailing Reasons bring him too:
 So greatly blest, his Judgment thus extends,
 Please but your Foe, your Friends will still be Friends.
 Nor less his Eloquence the Govern-man charms,
 Than his true Fortitude the Man of Arms;
 For, spite of all the Roughness Soldiers boast,
 At Sight of him their Terrors all are lost;
 So *debonair* they cringe, seem so polite,
 But for their Coats, you would not think they'd fight.
 Press'd by each Sect of Men, he smiles Assent,
 Each claps his Heart, and goes away content.

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He smiles serene, nor heeds the Frowns of Men;
 Who obstinately dare his Deeds arraign:
 O! would the *Annals* but my Story tell,
 I wish his Praise would all their Volumes swell;
 No *History* else, but his dear Fame alone
 Should to th'admiring future Age be shown;
 How right he judg'd, how bravely, justly thought,
 And shunn'd his own, whilst *Britain's* Fame he fought;
 Resign'd his Rest, and sacrific'd his Ease,
 His Nation's *Wealth* and *Honour* to increase:
 Averse to Titles, scorning vulgar State,
 His only Pride is to be Good as Great.

Amongst these *Virtues* should one *Vice* prevail,
 And *Love* his once unguarded Soul assail;
 Is he to blame? Call back an am'rous Scene,
 And see what once your Favourite *Fl--ry's* been,
 When the fond *Dotard*, lost to nobler Cares,
 The Business of the World, and S--te-Affairs,
 To the good *Bishop* a kind Billet sent,
 While *Spain's* Express to Madam ---- went;
 This *Fl--ry* did, yet *Fl--ry* is allow'd,
 Fond of his Country, honest, just, and good.

Now turn thy Eye—see *Britain's* Banner wave,
 And the glad Surge her haughty Vessels lave:
 Where'er her Navy spreads her Canvas Wings,
 Something or other to our Land she brings!

Around

Around the World, where'er her Flag they see,
 Those that can't *beat* her, from her Presence *flee*
 Whilst half the Globe's disturb'd by dire Alarms,
 She sits, *unmov'd*, amidst the Clank of Arms.
 How dare *Iberia* trifle with her Rage?
 What can she do her Passion to assuage?
 Vengeance will come—Be wise, in Time, *O Spain*,
 Know that they're stil'd, *The Masters of the Main*.
Britons are brave, unus'd to abject Fears,
 And value not a Pair or two of *Ears*.
 But if you still persist, once rous'd to ire,
 Sudden Destruction waits upon their Fire:
 Nor vainly still your *Depredations* keep,
 Because you think our *Lyons* are asleep;
 For soon you'll find by the too sudden Clap,
 They've only just laid down, *to take a Nap*.
 Nor let the haughty *Gaul* too much presume,
 Lest she from *Britain* once more meets her Doom.
 See where new Beauties bloom, new Glories rise,
 To waft her deathless Honours to the Skies:
 Why sail her Fleets triumphant o'er the Seas,
 But to procure her Plenty, Wealth, and Ease?
 The Joys to come in *Danger* give Delight,
 They toil for Quiet, and for Peace they fight.
 To all around so dreadful is their Pow'r,
 That let them bask upon their native Shore,
 From *Portsmouth's* Plain their Cannon will be heard,
 And *British* Navies at *Spithead* be fear'd:

What more concerns us—view our dear-lov'd Lord
 By cruel Men deny'd his just Reward:
 Revil'd by some, their feeble Threats he scorns,
 His Bosom now for *Britain's* Safety burns;
 But *Prudence* for a while bids him forbear,
 Whence basely some misconstrue, *It is Fear*;
 Let 'em rail on, secure in his own Wiles,
 Their Case he pities, and at home he smiles:
 In his old Age, at Ease, reviews the Scene
 Of Troubles past, quite undisturb'd, serene;
 Thro' calm Philosophy's true Optick views
 Each empty Joy that busy Man pursues;
 Hence, unafflicted at your Death, for mine,
 He did vouchsafe a Sigh upon my Shrine.
 Beneath yon' Bower, where, in Ringlets twine
 The fragrant Am'ranth, and the Eglantine;
 I'll make Reception for his much-lov'd Shade,
 Or wander gently with him thro' yon' Glade:
 There, with those noble Lovers, will we stray,
 And tread Love's softer Paths and flow'ry Way;
 Review our *Britain*, joyful to behold,
 By him restor'd again, *The Age of Gold*.

From these dark Regions long may *Buso* stay:
 Keep back the Hour, ye Fates! late be the Day!
 But see the monumental Trophies rise,
 And *Emblems* praise his Virtues to the Skies:

All *England* mourns—too great's the Loss to bear ;
 The Matrons weep, the Virgins tear their Hair !
 When this sad Day shall come, you'll quickly see,
 Who claims his Love, *Clarissa*, You or Me !

Rage long had struggled in *Clarissa's* Breast,
 Which now broke out, and would not be suppress'd ;
 All *Tart'rus* shook----for ev'ry howling Shade
 Doth *Female Rage* with secret Terror dread :
They both Prepar'd----when lo! just *Minos* comes,
 And thus decrees the hated *Rivals* Dooms :

Equal's your Crime----therefore in that dark Cell,
Confin'd together, --- form each other's H----

F I N I S.

All England mourns---too great's the loss to bear;
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 When this sad Day shall come, you'll quickly see
 Who claims his Love, Clavissa, You or Me!

Rage long had struggled in Clavissa's Breast,
 Which now broke out, and would not be suppress;
 All Terrors shook----for every howling Shade
 Doth Female Rage with secret Terror dread:
 They both prepar'd----when lo! just Minos comes
 And thus decrees the hated Rivals' Dooms:
 Equal's your Crime----therefore in that dark Cell
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F I W I S

